# Virtual Native American excavations: Conduct archaeological investigations online!



Project Title	Virtual Native American excavations: Conduct archaeological investigations online!
Project	Choose from one of four fascinating research topics: Cherokee place name research,
Summary	Elisha Mitchell (Mt. Mitchell), "Lettered Rock", or Balsam Mountains petroglyph sites.
Country	United States

### **Project Description**

- 1. Cherokee Place Name Research Create a a historic map and reference research for the origin of topographic place-names (mountain peaks, rivers, etc.) suspected of being associated with the ancestral Cherokee's former occupation. This research focus pertains to the Blacks mountain range located in the western North Carolina Appalachian highlands (Pisgah National Forest) including several of the highest peaks in Eastern North America.
- 2. Elisha Mitchell is known for establishing Mt. Mitchell as the highest mountain peak in Eastern North America in the 1820s. Located along the Blacks Mountain Range (Pisgah National Forest), this research project will specifically focus on investigating the Mitchell records for notations, documentation, stories or any Native American (Cherokee) content Mitchell may have recorded during his early 20th Century efforts.
- 3. There are a few historic references for the "Lettered Rock" once located on the Grandfather Ranger District of the Pisgah National Forest. It is named so because the carvings or paintings once described there resembled Native American picture writing. There are map notations (1920s/1930s) for the location of the Lettered Rock, but no known pictures or in depth personal accounts for what was there. This research project will focus on finding any historic references or photographs of the Lettered Rock that may authenticate it as a pre-contact Native American petroglyph or pictograph.
- 4. In Haywood County, on the Pisgah National Forest, conduct research of the Balsam Mountains for the possible location of Native American petroglyphs described in prominent historic Cherokee stories specific to that area. Several petroglyph sites have been documented and associated with Spirit World cosmographic stories about Judaculla (Tsul-ka-lu), an especially potent Cherokee Spirit World being considered as being the "Master of Game Animals". One rock carving or petroglyph described in the Cherokee lore has yet to be found or authenticated, but local Haywood County histories or family stories may provide clues to its location This research project will focus on delving into local historic reference materials or individuals for information about the possible presence of petroglyphs in the area.

## **Required Skills or Interests**

#### Skill(s)

Analytical writing

Cultural diplomacy

Data analysis

Data visualization

Research

Writing

#### **Additional Information**

Volunteers will be signed up under Individual Volunteer Agreements (OF-301a). All Volunteers are asked to record their hours worked on this project and will be reported in the Volunteer & Service Programs Accomplishments Database (VSReports), the official reporting database.

# **Language Requirements**

None